Big Four Prospects—*J. A. del Vayo*

THE Nation

January 6, 1951

Does Russia Expect War

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

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Spain: The Poor Get Poorer

BY BASIL DAVIDSON

*

Knights in Shining Buicks

BY CAREY McWILLIAMS

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The New "King Lear"

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THE Nation

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To a Brave New Year

THE late 1950 was the kind of year in the affairs of the country that few of us can look back on with pleasure. As for the bare chronology, there had of course been many worse years, some, like 1940 for example, far worse. That was the year, just a decade ago, when the Nazis successively overran Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and finally France; when Adolf Hitler jigged in the streets of Paris and three-fourths of the British army was lucky to escape from Europe in the hell of Dunkirk; when the Luftwaffe opened up on England by smashing the town of Coventry, and Molotov visited Berlin for an amicable chat with Hitler on the "New Order." Compared with that unbroken chain of disasters, 1950 was mild indeed, with only the triumph of communism in China and our own defeat in North Korea to be mentioned in the same breath.

But chronologies tell little of spirit, morale, political atmosphere, or leadership, and in these matters the United States sagged badly in 1950. The year saw the techniques of the old Dies committee magnified many times in their evil and transplanted to the floor of the Senate in the person of Joseph McCarthy. It saw the use of the "big lie" employed in American politics consciously and deliberately in an effort to discredit the Administration through the State Department.

This was the year of the McCarran act, a year in which fear spread poison on all levels of American life. It was not enough to convict the Communist leaders for "conspiring to teach the desirability" of overthrowing the government at some vague future time, but Jean Muir had to be barred from the television screen as "Mother Aldrich" because someone said she had once been a "fellow-traveler." The mania for loyalty oaths spread from the college campus to the gambling dens of Reno. Not only were all employees of the Columbia Broadcasting System ordered to bare their political pasts, but at least in New York all volunteers for civilian defense work had to do likewise. A woman who, we will say, belonged to the League Against War and Fascism back in 1936 could not sign up as a nurse's aid in 1950 without recording her membership in that organization, thereby branding herself as at least retroactively "subversive."

In keeping with our fears at home was the resurgence of infantilism in our view of the world. Among some the Hoover thesis prevailed—that the best hope of humanity was for the mighty United States to pull into its shell and avert its gaze while the rest of the world fell into the Soviet orbit. To others, the Administration included, rigid intransigence appeared to be the only alternative to appeasement. A slave to his implacable opponents, Mr. Acheson seemed bent on outdoing them in scorning all thought of an eventual settlement with the Russians. And this, in turn, stimulated the latent anti-Americanism abroad and deepened the mistrust, in Europe and in Asia, of our capacity to lead the nations of the West.

So it was at the year's end. It need not—in fact it dare not—be so in 1951. We have been through just this kind of rough weather before—in the years preceding the Civil War and those leading up to World War II. But if we are to come through intact, there must again be a change in climate. Some Republican leaders will have to be jolted into remembering that they are Americans first—they didn't remember it when they tripped up Acheson on the eve of the Brussels conference; the Administration will have to show more vision, more flexibility, and more understanding of our allies than it has yet displayed; and Americans in general will have to insist that their Senators and Representatives observe at least the standards of justice and decency that obtain in a magistrate's court. But above all, in this new year of 1951, we need to hear again and again, and to believe deeply, the counsel of Franklin D. Roosevelt that "there is nothing to fear but fear itself."

The Shape of Things

THE EIGHT WEEKS THAT HAVE PASSED SINCE his announcement on November 2, 1950, that it would be a long, long time before he sent an ambassador to Spain, must have seemed sufficient to Mr. Truman to fulfil his prediction, for last Wednesday he named Stanton Griffis to the post. The President and his Secretary of State are probably weary of being criticized for every step they take in foreign affairs, but they must understand that no other single action could have caused greater damage to the democratic cause than this last surrender to Hitler's heir. As Mr. del Vayo points out on page 6, it is absolutely impossible to convince the peoples

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of the world that we are fighting for democracy when we go out of our way to cuddle up to the Caudillo. The French reaction alone should have been sufficient to sustain the President in his original resolve. Socialist members of the French Cabinet—who certainly are not extremists, having given strong support to the Atlantic Pact—threatened to resign if a French ambassador were sent to Madrid and refused to be moved by arguments about the gravity of the international situation. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, to which both the C. I. O. and A. F. of L. belong, has taken a similar stand. Providing a final ludicrous touch to the American decision is the fact that Franco's envoy, José F. Lequerica, is one of the worst Spanish fascists. As war-time ambassador to Vichy, he was an open enemy of the United States, on one occasion proposing a toast to Japanese victory. Having surrendered on principle, the State Department is in no position to be squeamish, but even so, a remnant of decency would have spared Americans the humiliation of accepting this man.

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DID THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS MOVE INTO Korea on Moscow's order—the popular American theory—or did they act independently and against the Kremlin's wishes in order to assert China's dominance in that embattled land? This question has been raised by dispatches in the New York *Times* from Tokyo and Belgrade which, relying apparently on quite different sources of information, arrive at rather similar conclusions. The unsigned Tokyo story, dated December 24, declared that according to "authenticated information" gathered by members of the U. N. commission in Korea, the Chinese intervened only after they noted that North Korean leaders trained in China were being supplanted by men who had received their revolutionary education in Russia. Since the Chinese "volunteers" took over, this situation has been reversed. On December 26 M. S. Handler, filing from Belgrade, summarized an editorial in the Titoist *Review of International Affairs* which asserted that the Soviet government, uneasy at the growth of Communist China's influence in Asia, decided to enhance its own prestige in the Far East by promoting a military operation to bring all Korea under Russian control. Its plans were thwarted, first, by the defeat of its North Korean puppets by the U. N. forces, and, second, by the contrasting victory of the Chinese, who are now in control of territory where the Russians were formerly paramount. "The government of the U. S. S. R.," declares the *Review*, "will doubtless be forced to perceive that the attempt to impose its tutelage on Peking was just as unrealistic as the American de jure ignoring of the People's Republic of China." Although they do not provide conclusive evidence by any means, these stories certainly support the theory that in the long run the historical rivalries

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between Russia and China will dissolve the ideological cement that has bound Peking to Moscow.

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IN A LONG OVERDUE MOVE TO RESTRICT credit the Federal Reserve Board has decreed a 2 per cent increase in member-bank reserves. This action in effect freezes $2 billion of bank funds, which potentially could have supported a total expansion of $12 billion in loans. It follows the acknowledged failure of the Federal Reserve System to secure a voluntary restriction of credit. The difficulty about that method was that it placed on the individual banker the burden of discriminating between essential and non-essential loans at the risk of offending good customers and losing business to less conscientious competitors. Possibly in the absence of official appeals for restraint the total volume of borrowing would now be even greater than it is, but in any case the $7 billion growth in bank credit recorded in the past six months is far too large to be healthy. As the Federal Reserve announcement says "this is an unprecedented rate of expansion and has contributed to the excessive rise in the money supply." Certainly the easy availability of credit and its relative cheapness despite some hardening of money rates have encouraged speculative buying for inventory. In order to meet higher reserve requirements the banks will have to reduce their total earning assets. If they do this by refusing to renew old loans and looking harder at requests for new ones, the objective of the Federal Reserve will be achieved. But what if they seek to replenish loanable funds by selling government securities? In that event the Federal Reserve will have to decide whether it is going to support the market by adding to its own holdings of government bonds, which would stultify its action in increasing reserve requirements, or whether it is going to discourage such bank sales by letting bond prices fall. If it chooses the second course it will again find itself in conflict with the Treasury unless Secretary Snyder has been persuaded that a rise in interest rates may prove less expensive than further inflation.

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PREMIER RENE PLEVEN HAS GAINED THE backing of the National Assembly for a program which seeks to reconcile rearmament and recovery, and he can thus show Washington that the funds necessary to create the new divisions demanded in Brussels will be forthcoming, while reassuring French taxpayers as to the sacrifices to be asked of them. M. Pleven forced the adoption of a military budget of two billion dollars for 1951, the highest in France's history. In an all-night session he won a series of votes of confidence by margins varying from 91 to 146—a remarkable accomplishment under prevailing circumstances. His program must now be approved by the Council of the Republic, where the followers of General de Gaulle, sharply critical of earlier West European rearmament plans, form the largest single group. It is generally thought that M. Pleven will get his bill through the Council, but if it should be defeated there, the constitution requires a two-thirds' vote in the Assembly to override the defeat. Other hazards must be overcome by the Pleven government in 1951. The problem of electoral reform will grow more acute as France prepares to go to the polls; to date all attempts to find a compromise solution have failed. And apart from the internal political and financial difficulties threatening an insecure Cabinet, there will be mounting international tension and the burning problem of Germany's rearmament.

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SINCE WE GO TO PRESS BEFORE THE NEW Congress meets, we do not know what the Senate's reaction will be to the announcement by Senator Clinton Anderson, New Mexico Democrat, that he will protest the seating of John Marshall Butler, Republican Senator-elect from Maryland. Democrats and Republicans should seriously consider the fraud and chicanery that marked Butler's campaign against his defeated opponent, Millard Tydings. Maryland was blanketed with half a million copies of a dodger purporting to expose Tydings's "record" and reproducing a faked picture showing Tydings beside Earl Browder, former Communist leader. This picture was created by a Washington *Times-Herald* executive, now Butler's aide, engraved in the *Times-Herald* plant, printed on *Times-Herald* presses. Butler knew about the fake, assented to it, and benefited from it. Political campaigns are frequently dirty, but in the past the Senate has been sufficiently jealous of its honor to deny membership to persons guilty of far less serious offenses than the distribution of spurious "composite" photographs.

✳

SENATOR LESTER C. HUNT OF WYOMING IS not so well known as he should be. A conservative Democrat, little heard since he took his seat two years ago, he is the first Senator who seems determined to do something concrete about the menace of McCarthyism. The Senator has brought in two measures, the first of which calls for a constitutional amendment stripping members of Congress of the immunity from lawsuit which they have traditionally enjoyed and too often abused. Recognizing the difficulty and the time involved in getting the Constitution amended, Mr. Hunt has further proposed a simple statutory change that would permit an individual who considers himself defamed by a member of Congress to sue the government, just as he might if he were injured by a government-owned truck. The Rankins and McCarthys might still feel free to slander under the latter proposal, but at least the victim could ultimately receive judicial clearance and compensation. With the active backing of Senator Kefauver of

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Tennessee, Hunt has gone far to destroy the shabby tradition that the Senate is an exclusive club whose members owe more consideration to one another than to their constituents. "If situations should confront us," he said, "when we . . . are no longer able to control our own members by the rules of society, justice, and fair play, then we must take drastic steps to control them." McCarthy's incredibly brazen attempt to coerce radio networks and newspapers to drop Drew Pearson should awaken even the Hearst press to the fact that unbridled members of Congress may be as great a menace as a tyrannical executive. If Hunt is right in saying that "the American citizen wishes no longer to tolerate such high-handed, irresponsible actions," here is the American citizen's chance to prove it. Let his Senator and his Representative hear from him, quickly and clearly. Congress does not often consider reforming itself.

American Neutralism

LET us face it! Public reaction to Mr. Hoover's speech proposing retreat from Europe and concentration on the defense of a "Western Hemisphere Gibraltar of Civilization" indicates a widespread revival of blind isolationism. The ex-President's address has been editorially commended by newspapers across the country, including a number hitherto regarded as "internationalist." It has inspired a tremendous spate of letters from readers, a majority of which, according to a survey made by the Associated Press, seem to favor the policy of withdrawal.

It is not difficult to riddle intellectually the Hoover program, and that job has been ably performed by many writers and public men, including leading Republicans. John Foster Dulles, in his broadcast address to the American Association for the United Nations, said on December 29: "You can plan on paper what it seems should be an impregnable line of defense, a China Wall, a Maginot Line, a Rock of Gibraltar, an Atlantic and Pacific Moat. But the mood that plans such a defense carries within itself the seeds of its own collapse. . . . A United States which could be an inactive spectator while the barbarians overran and desecrated the cradle of our Christian civilization would not be the kind of a United States that could defend itself."

It is also easy to demonstrate the economic absurdity of Mr. Hoover's military calculus, as Secretary Acheson did when he declared in his review of 1950: "The Soviet Union, holding in unhappy bondage the peoples of Eastern Europe, wields enough power without making the Soviet imperialists a gift of the productive capacity and technical skills of Western Europe, plus the strategic resources and man-power of the Middle East and Asia."

Arguments such as these, however, which appeal to the mind, are not likely to have much impact on the emotions stirred up by Mr. Hoover. A sampling of letters to the press suggests that millions of our people are terrified of involvement in a world war and, in particular, fear that Europe will prove a bigger and worse Korea. The A. P. survey quotes one very significant, and apparently typical, letter from a California woman, which says: "Bring our boys back, fortify this nation, and the foreign nations will leave us alone." This indicates a kind of American "neutralism," the prevalence of a mood from which real appeasement could grow. Why die for Copenhagen or Paris or Bagdad or Bangkok? Let Stalin have Europe and Asia. That might satisfy his ambitions or, better still, provide him with a fatal surfeit of undigestible conquests—ex-Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy's wishful notion.

Mr. Hoover did not create this mood, but he has given it a rationale. The European peoples, he told his listeners, are feeble and disunited. They have not the will to defend themselves; why, then, should we pour out our blood and treasure to defend them? True, the evidence with which he supported these charges was sketchy in the extreme, but many of his listeners were not in a position to assess the accuracy of such remarks as that the British Commonwealth has 150,000,000 people, an estimate which neglected some 400,000,000 in India, Pakistan, and Ceylon. Moreover, many Americans have been conditioned to believe our allies both feeble and faithless by the strident campaigns carried on in recent months by the Scripps-Howard, Hearst, and other papers.

Whatever motives may have inspired these campaigns —a desire to pressure Europe into underwriting our bankrupt China policy was the most obvious—their total effect has been to conjure up a spirit of defeatism which has now been further strengthened by Mr. Hoover. Seeking to allay this spirit, Mr. Dulles stressed in his speech recent democratic achievements of this country, domestic and international, which he claimed had served to check Soviet expansion. "Communism," he said, "pitted its youth against what it thought was our isolationism; its revolutionary practices against what it thought was our static mood. It found to its dismay a people who, when under pressure, did not decompose into factionalism and frustration."

Mr. Dulles, we fear, was putting a bolder face on the situation than the facts warrant, for if the present "great debate" has revealed anything, it is that "factionalism and frustration" are very much with us. Perhaps by bringing these evils into the open we shall dispel them, but not, we think, until the Administration convinces the people that its policy is genuinely designed to prevent war and not merely to prepare for it. This requires attention to moral as well as military "situations of strength" and as great resolution in opposing appeasement of reactionaries at home and abroad as in resisting appeasement of communism.

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The "Do-less" 82d

By WILLARD SHELTON

Washington, December 29

THE conservative coalition will be so strengthened in the Eighty-second Congress, which assembles on January 3, that President Truman's Fair Deal domestic program will have little or no chance of enactment. The sharpest conflicts will therefore be over foreign policy and the simple matter of who shall pay for rearmament.

In his State of the Union message Mr. Truman will presumably ask again for action on health insurance and an improved farm program. He may argue, and he should, that civil-rights legislation is more vital than ever now that communism has shifted its emphasis from the class conflict to discrimination based on color and race—an approach that is extremely persuasive in Asia. He may argue, and he should, that keeping union labor in the Taft-Hartley strait-jacket is poor advertising for American democracy. He may urge the repeal of the McCarran anti-subversive law because its stringencies damage rather than promote internal security and make people abroad, even our friends, wonder whether this country is so befuddled by its struggle with communism that it is ready to sacrifice basic freedoms.

But nothing will happen. Southern Democrats, Western Democrats of the McCarran stripe, and conservative Republicans will have control. Taft, McCarran, Senator Russell and Representative Cox of Georgia, and Republican House Leader Joe Martin will be the masters.

Martin and Cox have already served notice that they intend to make an effort on January 3 to restore to the House Rules Committee the power to keep legislation from reaching the floor—the power of which it was stripped in January, 1949. Half a dozen important bills passed by the Eighty-first Congress were able to be brought to a free vote in the House only because the Rules Committee could no longer exercise its veto. Such bills would not be likely to pass in the Eighty-second Congress even if the drive to change the rules were beaten, but Martin and Cox want to insure that in some more liberal future Congress the Rules Committee will be able to block progressive measures.

In the Senate the Administration will be harassed by the fire directed at Secretary of State Acheson, the implementing of the McCarran law, and the results of the New Deal and Fair Deal domestic reforms. The new Judiciary subcommittee proposed by McCarran to act as a watch dog over the anti-subversive law and as a permanent Senate un-American activities committee can be a constant threat to Mr. Truman. Many Republicans are persuaded that McCarthyism pays off at the polls.

Things will look worse for the Administration if the lethargy and indecisiveness of its supporters permit Senator McFarland of Arizona to be elected the new Senate majority floor leader in the democratic caucus on January 2. The liberals are pushing the candidacy of Senator O'Mahoney of Wyoming, but they waited so long before starting the O'Mahoney drive that McFarland got a tremendous start. Supported by two of the most astute political managers in the Senate, Hayden of Arizona and Russell of Georgia, McFarland will be elected if the Southern and silver-state Democrats can be rallied without exception behind him.

This would be a preposterous situation. McFarland voted for the Kerr natural-gas bill and the McCarran bill and was paired in favor of the basing-point bill—all of which President Truman vetoed. The practical job of the majority floor leader is to maneuver the Administration's program through the Senate. By his political philosophy and parliamentary skill O'Mahoney is far better equipped to represent the Administration, and Mr. Truman would be glad to have him. The last-minute strategy of O'Mahoney's supporters is to detach some of McFarland's prospective Southern supporters by introducing a third candidate, Senator Sparkman of Alabama. The theory is that if MacFarland is blocked in the first ballot, Sparkman's votes will swing to O'Mahoney; certainly Sparkman and O'Mahoney are closer in their general views than Sparkman and McFarland. Reports leaked out yesterday that the White House was "not officially" opposed to McFarland. That is difficult to credit, and if true, it reflects a failure to comprehend what is involved.

The picture is not so grim in the field of foreign policy. If a "great debate" shapes up, with Taft frankly adopting the suicidal withdrawal-from-Europe program of Herbert Hoover and trying to seize G. O. P. foreign-policy leadership from the absent Senator Vandenberg, the balance of power in the closely divided Senate is likely to be held by the liberal Republicans—Morse, Aiken, Tobey, and Margaret Smith. The coalition to save the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will probably be made up of Democrats and Republican liberals.

Grave crises may arise as Congress wrestles with foreign policy. The neo-isolationists have undoubtedly been strengthened by Republican election gains, and Senator Knowland's amendment of the Yugoslav-aid bill to provide equal funds for Chiang Kai-shek might have passed had it come before the incoming Eighty-second Congress. Moreover, injudicious and ill-considered policies toward Asia may be forced on the Administration by what is considered the necessity of compromising with the Republicans. In the present national danger, however, a majority of the next House and Senate can be expected to vote responsibly, and the Taft and Knowland followers are not likely to prevail.

On the question of who is to pay for mobilization strong Administration leadership will be needed to achieve genuine equality of sacrifice. Prerequisites to the

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control of wages are a new national rent-control law and the courage to adopt such drastic measures as are required to hold down purchasing power and control food prices. Enforced saving and subsidized food production are not likely to be popular in a conservative Congress, but a $75,000,000,000 budget—$50,000,000,000 for armaments—creates problems that must be met with imagination and decision.

Any conceivable program for our own military preparedness is likely to be accepted. The real tests of the Administration's strength will come on the tax measures and the plan for economic stabilization. It is not yet clear whether stabilization will be boldly proposed in one of the four major messages scheduled to be sent to Congress during January—on the State of the Union, the budget, the economic report, and taxes.

Big Four Prospects

BY J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

AS LONG ago as October 19 the Soviet Union served notice, in official communications to the governments of the United States, Great Britain, and France and through statements in its press, that the rearming of West Germany would cause a major crisis. Whatever happens now, no one will be able to talk of a Pearl Harbor, of treachery and a surprise attack. In Europe the warning has been taken seriously. "Le réarmament allemand, c'est la guerre," is believed by many people, and they therefore welcome every new attempt to bring about a rapprochement between the West and Russia.

It was under the pressure of public opinion, horrified at the thought of a repetition of the Korean experience in Europe, that the Western powers accepted "in principle" the Soviet proposal for a conference of the Big Four. They accepted it with visible reluctance. Many weeks were spent in a preliminary exchange of views among Paris, London, and Washington. At a meeting of ambassadors M. Parodi of France argued for the usefulness of Big Four talks even if they took up only the German question. But he encountered the firm opposition of Mr. Bruce, the American ambassador at Paris, who insisted that the West's reply should make merely general allusion to the Soviet offer and should lay down conditions which Moscow would find difficult to accept at present. This was the line followed. And in order that there might be no doubt about the unwillingness of the United States to enter into negotiations with Russia, Washington accompanied the dispatch of the reply with the usual warning that the American people should not place too much hope in a conference. A strange way to seek international reconciliation!

Opinion in France and England continues to exert pressure on the governments of the two countries to dissociate themselves from a policy which closes the door to any understanding with Russia. The "neutralist" movement in France is gaining strength. When I wrote about this movement from Paris last summer, it was limited in the main to intellectual circles. Since then it has spread rapidly. Georges Bidault, the former Premier, writing in *Aube-Dimanche*, tried to belittle its importance, but he betrayed his concern over its extension. "The propaganda for neutrality," he said, "although neither noisy nor organized, has greater influence than its content warrants." Many factors, indeed, are operating to prevent the United States from pursuing to the bitter end its policy of containing Russia in Europe by force.

American officials are disturbed because their warnings to the Defense and Foreign Ministers of the Atlantic Pact nations at the Brussels meeting have as yet failed to speed up European rearmament. They fear that time is running short. But there are other things to worry about. Let us suppose that, by some miracle, France could place fifteen motorized divisions in the field tomorrow. There would remain the problem of the soldiers' morale. Where would you find tens of thousands of French mechanics who would put their hearts into fighting in a coalition army made up of Germans, Spanish Falangists, and fascists collected from here, there, and everywhere?

The American military intelligence service in Korea has been called inefficient. But the American intelligence service whose mission is to gauge the political temper of Europe is evidently no more competent. It seems able to discover only negative qualities in Europeans—the apathy of the French, the egoism of the British, the cowardice and lack of fighting spirit of Europeans in general. It fails to perceive the signs of health and strength in their revolt against neo-Hitlerism and their refusal to be forced into an alliance with a half-Nazi Germany and a dictator like Franco.

Obsessed by the thought of the 175 Russian divisions ready to march, Western strategists think only of how to dispatch the greatest possible number of men to this or that threatened point, entirely forgetting the political side of the war—and therefore heading straight for disaster. They don't realize that the Russian troops, being animated by a common ideology, are a stronger force, quite apart from their numbers, than a heterogeneous body of men in which anti-fascists would have to fight at the side of fascists and for a cause which could never be sold to them as a war of liberation. It may be possible to make the American people believe that the Western allies are the defenders of democracy, even while the Spanish dictator's power is bolstered by loans, by the appointment of an American ambassador to Madrid, and by all the current talk of including Spain in the Atlantic coalition. But Europeans only laugh when they are exhorted to die for such a cause.

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"Let the Americans fight their own wars" is what the British say, according to Ludwell Denny, a Scripps-Howard correspondent now in England. He reports having heard this from men and women on the streets of London, in the clubs and pubs, and even in the House of Commons.

The lack of an idea to fight and die for makes the thought of war still more repugnant and creates an atmosphere favorable to negotiation. The Kremlin knows this, and if nothing comes of its recent proposal for a conference, it will repeat the offer in one form or another in 1951. Impetus will thus be given to the growing movement in favor of trying every possible means of reaching a settlement before embarking on war.

The idea of Big Four talks will dominate the international scene in coming months, and American diplomacy will do well to seize the opportunity thereby offered to extricate itself from its present difficulties.

Does Russia Expect War?

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

Paris, December

FROM a study of the Soviet press and from the little news that still leaks out of the country, one can get some idea of how Moscow estimates the chances of general war in 1951. To begin with, the Russians seem a good deal happier today than they were last summer. Whether they were directly or only indirectly responsible for the invasion of South Korea, they were profoundly disturbed by the sharp American reaction to it. For all their screaming about the United States having forced the U. N.'s hand and the Security Council's decisions being "illegal," they felt acutely uncomfortable about the turn of events. World opinion held that the North Koreans did not have a good "moral case," and Moscow went out of its way therefore to dissociate itself from them and to give them openly only "the most heartfelt moral support." In August, when the American forces were all but thrown into the sea at Pusan, Boris Kefimov drew funny cartoons of a tophatted Syngman Rhee swimming across the Pacific with an American general on his back; but the Soviet government refused to supply the 100 tanks the North Koreans needed. American "preventive war" speeches were not without effect, and Moscow was unwilling, at that moment, to support the North Koreans at the risk of precipitating a world war.

After the Inchon landing, Russian propaganda used the North Korean débâcle as an opportunity to stir up anti-American hatred throughout Asia. It made the most of the mass bombings, of the Americans' "contempt for yellow life," of the destruction of the industries "so lovingly" set up by the People's Democracy in North Korea, and of the atrocities committed by Syngman Rhee's police. However, as long as the fighting was south of the Thirty-eighth Parallel neither the Chinese nor the Russians chose to budge. Russian nervousness at the possibility of becoming involved *at that time* may be seen from the extreme moderation with which the Soviet press handled the two air incidents—the shooting down of a Soviet plane based on Port Arthur and the bombing by an American plane of an airfield near Vladivostok. "Do you really imagine," one Russian observer remarked, "that we did not have the means to shoot down that bomber, so many miles inside our territory? We simply wanted no unpleasantness that we could help."

When MacArthur "allowed" the South Koreans to cross the Thirty-eighth Parallel, the U. N.'s feeble acceptance of the *fait accompli* marked the beginning of a new Russian—and Chinese—policy in relation to Korea. The Kremlin insists on getting very detailed, if not always accurate, reports on world opinion, and now it noted the increasing confusion about the right and wrong of the Korean war. Not only throughout Asia but in Europe too MacArthur began to symbolize "American imperialism" and to be regarded more and more generally as the "butcher of the Korean people" and the patron of the obscene Syngman Rhee. Soon Russia and China found themselves on the side of the angels. Moscow observed with glee the impressive consolidation of opinion in the Soviet-Asiatic bloc and the growing divisions among the Western powers. America was becoming the "obvious" aggressor. Why did it have to push on to the borders of Manchuria? For what purpose of "defense" did it need Formosa?

The Russian press gave prominence to the Chinese warnings against crossing the Parallel, though it said little at first about the appearance of Chinese "volunteers." Russian opinion would have dreaded Chinese intervention in the summer but by December welcomed it wholeheartedly. The violent reaction in England and Western Europe to Truman's atom-bomb statement of November 30 showed that Moscow had guessed right about the West's attitude toward the bomb. Europe also evinced the expected unqualified opposition to becoming in-

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volved in a war with China; and Vishinsky could now well afford to tell the Americans, in effect, to "get the hell out of Korea."

Russian commentators, unlike West European observers, have been careful not to draw any clear distinction between MacArthur and Truman. Truman, not MacArthur, is Enemy Number One. MacArthur is an underling, and to treat Truman as his helpless victim is absurd. MacArthur is merely a blundering general, but Truman is the Man of America's Rearmament.

"The American rout in Korea" has been signaled over and over again in the Russian press in the last few weeks. One reads: "We are quite confident, since November 30, that no atom bombs will be dropped on Manchuria, or anywhere else for the present. And if they are, then what?" The implication is clear: the Chinese would then occupy Korea and Indo-China, and if the United States started dropping atom bombs on Russia—well, then the Red Army would get its industrial and oil "replacements" in the Middle East and Western Europe. If the atom bomb should be dropped by the United States, little doubt would be left in anybody's mind as to the de facto aggressor.

Europe's reaction to the Korean crisis, in the Russian view, has not only revealed a rift among the Allies but, more important, strengthened isolationist and anti-European sentiment in the United States. *Pravda* has been going through American papers with a fine-tooth comb, picking up every crumb of evidence of a growing isolationism. The Russians are not banking on any fundamental disunity among the Western allies, but the Korean war appears to them to be a blatant demonstration of American political stupidity. They wonder, though, whether this stupidity is not now being cured—and the rift between the United States and Europe being healed—by the British, who have impressed upon America the necessity of giving Europe priority over the Far East and so saved the Western alliance.

If MacArthur is a joke to the Russians, German rearmament is not. They might be persuaded to regard an Atlantic army composed of Americans, British, and French as a *bona fide* defense force—if only because Britain and France would exercise restraint on the Americans. But a West German army which sooner or later might try to "unite" Germany or "liberate" German territories taken over by Czechoslovakia and Poland would be a real menace. The Russian offer to hold a four-power conference with a view to preventing the rearmament of Germany seems, therefore, to be dictated by genuine fear of a revised Wehrmacht. The memory of the only army that ever marched right across European Russia is a very grim one.

All the news from Russia today suggests that the Soviet authorities pride themselves on not having lost their heads over American and Western rearmament and on not having, in any visible way, suspended their huge "peace plans." An important armaments industry exists of course in Russia, but there is little evidence as yet that other industries are being converted to war production. The emphasis is rather on the further expansion of housing, on better living conditions, and on the pleasure of peace. At party and factory meetings the possibility of atom bombs being dropped on Russia is not discounted, but the line taken is that with the growing dispersal of industry and improved anti-aircraft defense, Soviet military power cannot be knocked out by atom bombs and that it can retaliate by marching into Western Europe and the Middle East and by dropping its own bombs on America. It is believed, moreover, that the reluctance of Western Europe to become involved in any sort of war will ultimately isolate the United States. The moral factor also counts: since Russia is committed by its whole propaganda against being the first to drop the bomb, America is bound to be the atomic aggressor, the most "criminal" kind of aggressor, in the eyes of many millions. Running through these discussions is the theme that even if the Americans are able to drop bombs on Moscow, it will not "pay" them, for "the harder you hit a Russian, the angrier he becomes."

IN THE end the most important question is whether or not Russia will "tolerate" the creation of a West German army. I have not found the slightest allusion in the Russian press to the possibility of a "preventive war" being started by the Soviets to forestall such a development. But after the screaming about the aggressive designs of the Atlantic Pact, especially since Germany has threatened to become part of it, it would take very little to make an invasion of Western Europe acceptable to the well-conditioned Soviet people and, still more, to the Red Army. Everything suggests that if the Soviet government is prepared for a showdown in Western Europe an "internal" German conflict will break out first and the East will then come forward as the "unifier" of Germany, before the West German Wehrmacht has time to do so. Only in the event of an atomic attack by the United States will the Red Army come into action in a full-fledged offensive.

Probably an agreement on Germany is still possible. The Russians would demand German demilitarization; failing that, they might agree to the formation of a limited armed police force in West Germany, the equivalent of the people's police in the eastern zone. If not even a limited agreement can be achieved, it is fairly easy to see Moscow working up a savage anti-German and anti-American mystique throughout the Slav and Mongol world. In revolutionary terms the destruction of Russian cities might be a price worth paying for the total isolation of the United States.

Both the Soviet government and the Russian people

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would doubtless prefer to have no war; the danger is that, with their phobia about Germany, they might think it a matter of life and death to prevent German rearmament. Once rearmament starts, there may be no limit to it, whatever is said at present. Also, the American military rout and political fiasco in Korea and Europe's reaction to the atom bomb have perhaps made Russia less war-shy than it was two months ago. Germany, as America's strongest land weapon, is the real center of Russia's worries, even if the new Wehrmacht does not become a major force for a couple of years. The West must finally decide which is more dangerous—to rearm or not to rearm Germany. Judging by the violence of the Russian reaction, rearmament seems the greater risk. At any rate, before the West takes this step, it might be well advised to find out what guaranties of security Russia is willing to offer if it refrains. Brussels has given us a breathing space; but while demilitarization still seems possible, it would be unrealistic to demand in return—as some have suggested—the political "westernization" of the whole of Germany. The de facto partition of a demilitarized Germany seems the most that can be achieved at present. It is a lesser evil than an armaments race in the two zones.

Knights in Shining Buicks

BY CAREY McWILLIAMS

Los Angeles

THERE was a time when the British sent us lords and dukes in quest of big game and heiresses. Then came an invasion of novelist-lecturers. Now a new type is visiting these shores, bent on describing Britain's agony in the throes of socialism.

Among the more successful of these heralds of calamity is Dr. Christopher Daniels of London, who has spoken from coast to coast on the crazy inefficiencies and Gestapo tyranny of the British health and medical program. According to Dr. Daniels, it was N. Lenin who first hit upon the idea that the way to gain control of a nation's economy was to gain control of its doctors. Socialism must be introduced "insidiously and through the emotions," and "the most emotional things" the Bolsheviks could think of were "birth, death, and sickness"; therefore "the cornerstone of the arch of a socialized state is a socialized system of medicine."

When Dr. Daniels appeared before the Chicagoland Council of the National Association of Foremen at the Union League Club in Chicago, he was introduced as "a physician, surgeon, dentist, and lawyer" who had been granted a "traveling fellowship" under the National Educational Program of Harding College, Searcy, Arkansas. There is no reason to doubt that Harding College arranged Dr. Daniels's tour and paid his expenses, but the question remains: Who made it possible for Harding College to award Dr. Daniels a traveling scholarship? And who provided the handsome Buick in which he went from meeting to meeting? Moreover, how does one qualify for a Harding College "traveling fellowship"; what are the standards and who are the judges?

It should be noted that the reception accorded Dr. Daniels by his colleagues in the medical profession was in sharp contrast with that met by visiting British physicians who favor national health insurance. For example, when Sir Heneage Ogilvie of Guy's Hospital, London, addressed the Western Surgical Association in 1949, he was asked if he liked the British system of health insurance. He replied that he did and gave his reasons. For his frankness Sir Heneage was accused of a breach of etiquette, and it has been suggested that he should not be cordially received on a second visit.

Even more effective than Dr. Daniels's tour was one made by Cecil Palmer, a lesser London publisher who some years ago dissolved his business in order to devote "more of his time to the crusade for individual freedom." Palmer is the founder of one of the principal "resistance" movements to British socialism—the British Society for Individual Freedom, which may be described as the counterpart of Merwin K. Hart's National Economic Council. He is an old and intimate friend of Hart's and was brought to this country by Hart in February, 1949, and presented to various influential groups as an expert economist. The visit was shrewdly timed. The November, 1948, election had pretty clearly demonstrated the tactical absurdity of attempting to pin a Communist label on the Truman Administration. Almost before the returns were tallied, the master-minds of American big-business propaganda announced their discovery that, after all, socialism had always been "the real menace." The logical way to develop this theme was to import disgruntled Britishers to treat the luncheon-club circuit to eyewitness accounts of Britain's decay. Their words would be testimony, not propaganda.

Palmer was an instant success. What he had to say about the "failure" of socialism in Britain was just what his audiences wanted to hear. According to Arnold

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CAREY McWILLIAMS, a staff contributor, has written a number of books, the latest of which is "Witch Hunt: The Revival of Heresy."

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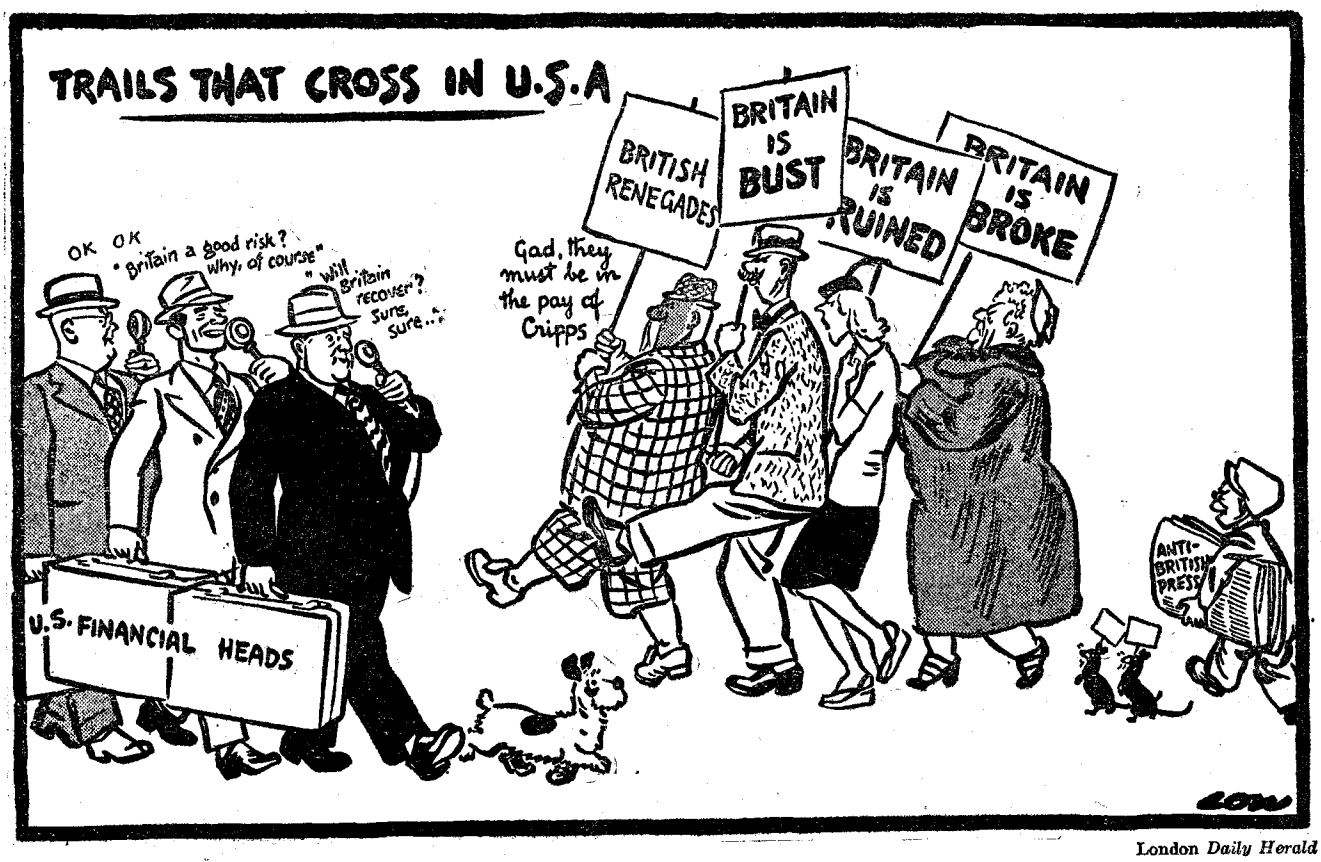
Forster of the Anti-Defamation League, in his book "A Measure of Freedom," Palmer's arrangements with Hart called for his receiving living and traveling expenses plus one-half of the gate receipts from his lectures, with a guaranty of $100 a week. With expert showmanship Hart arranged a large dinner meeting for Palmer in Washington. This meeting, which was attended by many Representatives and Senators, paved the way for Palmer's visit at the White House. The White House visit, negotiated by former Senator Albert W. Hawkes of New Jersey, provided the perfect send-off for Palmer on his cross-country junket.

ON HIS arrival in Los Angeles in March, after a highly successful tour, Palmer was treated by the press as if he were royalty. A large luncheon meeting at the Biltmore Hotel was sponsored by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants and Manufacturers Association and presided over by former Senator Hawkes. Some 1,200 persons attended it as "guests," among them as many foremen and plant superintendents as could be gathered in. The theme of Palmer's address was that Britain is "drinking the poison of communism out of the cup of socialism."

Returning to the East, Palmer spoke at the Waldorf-Astoria on October 26 at a huge $10-a-plate dinner arranged in his honor by Merwin K. Hart. Among those present were J. Howard Pew, Lammot du Pont, Representative Ralph W. Gwinn of New York, Senator James P. Kem of Missouri, former Senator Hawkes, and some of Hart's other friends, including Allen Zoll and Conde McGinley, publisher of an anti-Semitic sheet. The purpose of this dinner was achieved when Palmer was invited to speak at the convention of the National Association of Manufacturers. After making his speech at the convention he was given a standing ovation.

In the spring of 1950 Palmer came again to this country. On March 23 he spoke at Occidental College in Los Angeles on the theme "Socialism: Destroyer of British Freedom." Officers of the college say they did not know that Palmer had first visited the United States under the auspices of Hart's National Economic Council. Palmer was suggested as a speaker by Mrs. Morgan Padelford of Pasadena, who gave assurance that his fee would be paid by her father, former Senator Hawkes. Mrs. Padelford, a rather formidable Pasadena society dowager, is president of the local chapter of Pro-America.

A little later Palmer spoke on the same theme at Claremont College, having been suggested by Mrs. Padelford and by certain trustees. Pasadena at the time was in a frenzy of excitement over a local election called to approve a proposed increase in the school tax. Mrs. Padelford was one of the leading opponents of the measure, which was decisively rejected by the voters. During the campaign Pasadena voters were showered with propaganda on the familiar theme "progressive education is communism"; all this bore the imprint of Allen Zoll's National Council for American Education. (Zoll's background and his relations with Hart are documented in Arnold Forster's book.) Palmer's speech at a luncheon



London *Daily Herald*

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sponsored by the Federal Action Committee of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce was reprinted by the Chamber of Commerce as a pamphlet under the title "Socialism in Practice" and has been widely distributed.

A few other names, facts, and dates will bring the Daniels and Palmer tours into sharper focus. On March, 23, 1949, Freedom's Foundation, dedicated to the proposition that Americans must rally "to help check and then reverse the rapid encroachment of socialism," was incorporated in New York, with Don Belding of the advertising agency of Foote, Cone, and Belding as president and chairman of the board. Harding College, which arranged Dr. Daniels's tour, has received three cash awards from Freedom's Foundation.

On October 18, 1949, Representative Ralph W. Gwinn told a luncheon group at the California Club in Los Angeles that the "fight against socialism is practically lost" but that we must still fight on. The luncheon was sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and Dr. James W. Fifield's Spiritual Mobilization Organization. Dr. Fifield is also a winner of a Freedom's Foundation award. The next day the Chamber of Commere announced the formation of the Federal Action Committtee for the purpose of "reversing the socialistic trend in America." Don Belding's name was high on the list of members. On the same day Rear Admiral Leslie E. Gehres, retired, lashed out at socialism at a luncheon meeting, calling it "the chief peril" to American freedom; and soon afterward Walter S. Hallanan, chairman of the National Petroleum Council, at still another luncheon meeting denounced British socialism as "the real peril"—particularly because the British were using American loans to develop their oil reserves in the Middle East.

Russia, of course, is still "the enemy," but Britain has become the Dreadful Case History. This shift in emphasis accounts for the parade of British Knights in Shining Buicks. It is unfortunate that the attempt to use "British socialism" to smear American liberalism undermines Anglo-American relations at a critical period. Perhaps the Buchanan Committee on Lobbying can be induced to take a look at Freedom's Foundation, including its tax-exempt status, and also at Harding College and its "traveling fellowships." Isn't everyone nowadays in favor of "full disclosure"?

What Price Franco?

BY BASIL DAVIDSON

II. The Poor Get Poorer

Madrid, December 15

I AM told that two lions escaped recently from the Madrid Zoo. After a few months of varied experiences, they met to exchange gossip, and one of them, who was exceedingly fat, asked the other, who was exceedingly thin, how it came about that he had fared so ill. "I went up into the hills," the thin one replied, "and never got enough to eat. There's no nourishment in these Spaniards." The fat one said: "You should have copied me, brother. I stayed in Madrid. And I wandered around until I came to a big building where well-fed people walked in and out all day long. I've been eating one of them every day, but there are so many that the others don't notice."

This story circulated in Madrid as a comment on the Instituto Nacional de Previsión, one of the two semi-governmental social-welfare agencies. The Instituto and its fellow, the Montepios, collect enormous sums by forced levies on employed and employers ostensibly for social purposes. A small part of this revenue is spent on welfare and the rest placed at the service of the government, the two agencies being the main buyers of the public issues of the Bank of Spain. Since 75 per cent of all capital issues in the first six months of 1950 were made by the Bank of Spain, the institutes are invaluable contributors to the Treasury.

Another function of these and similar establishments is to provide employment—and the perquisites of employment, such as motor cars and graft—for the bureaucratic oligarchy of Franco's dictatorship. The existence of this oligarchy is the chief explanation of the government's failure to take any real measures to deal with the economic crisis, which is becoming worse with every month that passes. Ever since the civil war the civil and military henchmen of the regime have grown fat through the process of channeling a large part of the country's available wealth into their pockets. This wealth, as all statistics and all reliable opinions combine to show, has been constantly diminishing, and the oligarchy, therefore, demands an ever-greater share.

The evidence for the growing impoverishment of Spain can be briefly summarized, though its consequences in terms of human suffering are now so monumental that

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BASIL DAVIDSON, a staff correspondent of the New Statesman and Nation *(London), went to Spain at the request of* The Nation. *The third article of this series will consider the political balance sheet in Spain.*

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they defy brevity. Official statistics (see *Annuario Estadistico, 1950*) are certainly approximate, but they are all one has to go by, and they can be relied upon not to discredit the regime any more than is inevitable. While the population continues to grow at a rate which is probably not less than 250,000 a year—so that, allowing for a million deaths from the civil war, there are at least 2,000,000 and perhaps as many as 3,000,000 more mouths to feed than in 1936—the production of food steadily declines. The wheat crop in the ten years 1926-35 averaged 41,248,000 quintals; in 1948, the last year for which official figures have been published, it was only 24,263,000 quintals, and the years between show a continuous drop. The production of barley has declined from an average of 22,237,000 quintals to 13,332,000, of oats from 6,374,000 to 3,730,000, of rice from 3,000,000 to 2,212,000, of maize from 4,461,000 to 3,879,000, and of potatoes from 44,501,000 to 26,745,000. The only crops which have more or less maintained their pre-civil-war averages are olive oil and lentils; all vegetables other than lentils have fallen sharply.

Allowing for the bigger population, this means that the per capita consumption of Spanish wheat—not to speak of other foods—can be only about half what it was before the civil war. To counter such an appalling situation, which has struck with particular ferocity at the third of the population living in towns, Franco has had to import wheat from every possible source. In 1948 and 1949 the Argentine helped him greatly, but Perón refuses to extend further credit, and Franco has nothing but promises with which to pay. New York banks have made two or three small loans, mostly for the purchase of food, but these have been secured against gold; and Franco's gold reserve, in consequence, is now so small that the Bank of Spain refuses to admit exactly what it is. The fiduciary currency issue, notwithstanding, continues to expand, and twice in the past year the government has had to raise the legal limit—facts which speak volumes for the runaway inflation now raging. Taking imported wheat into the calculation, one may say that the average Spaniard gets about two-thirds as much bread as he did before the civil war. In the current winter the government expects to have to import 350,000 tons of wheat in order to maintain even the tiny official ration—a small roll a day. It is this fact which has made the admission of Spain into such U. N. agencies as the Food and Agriculture Organization of overriding importance to the dictatorship.

THE decline in food production seems to have two principal causes. The first is the almost total neglect of soil conservation and improvement. No more than 1 per cent of the national budget was allocated to agriculture in 1950, a typical year, while 55 per cent went to the armed forces and the security services of the Ministry of the Interior. The government is importing only about one-third as much of the vitally needed nitrogenous fertilizers as the Republic imported. In several long journeys across the central plateau of Castile, where agriculture is extensively practiced in conditions much like those of southern Italy, I saw no modern equipment of any kind. The mule and the donkey are still the principal means of traction; the steel plow is rare.

The second cause of declining food production is even more intimately related to the nature of the regime: growers are subjected to a strait-jacket of controlled prices intended ostensibly to bring cheap wheat to market but resulting in fact in a dwindling acreage under cultivation and an unlimited black market in bread. These controls act as one more instrument for the individual enrichment of members of the bureaucracy: the opportunities afforded for "private deals" in food are apparently unlimited.

The condition of industry is harder to summarize. Broadly, though, it appears to be true that high industrial profits have been dissipated in luxury spending by a relatively insignificant number of people, invested in real estate, or used as working capital to meet sharply rising costs. The steel industry, for instance, is producing at about 70 per cent of capacity, and the capacity is apparently the same as it was in 1929, the peak year. It is typical of the regime that the government has now erected a special state-monopolist organization—the Instituto Nacional de Industria, patterned on Fascist and Nazi models—to compete with the monopoly of private industry. Although existing steel plants are much in need of modernization, the state proposes to build an entirely new plant in the Asturias, spending on capital equipment the foreign exchange that might more sensibly be used to buy coal. Much of the working capital for this new plant is to be provided by para-governmental organizations like the Instituto Nacional de Previsión.

The administrative inefficiency of the regime is clearly demonstrated by conditions in the electric-power industry. The production of electricity has risen from 2,801,000,000 kwh. in 1936 to 5,075,000,000 kwh. in 1949, but in spite of this creditable improvement, industries in Madrid, at the time of writing, have power only nine hours a week, textile mills in Barcelona one day a week. The government blames the drought, but something more is needed to explain why a doubling of output should be accompanied by power cuts without precedent. When one probes the matter, one finds evidence of almost bottomless inefficiency in distribution. More power stations were constructed, for instance, but grid-cables were not renewed; so that losses in transmission are said unofficially to be as high as 25 per cent.

But it is when one looks at the way the great majority of the people live that the proofs of the country's impoverishment become overwhelming. According to offi-

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cial indices, the cost of living is about six times as high as it was in 1936; wages are little more than twice as high. In reality the gap must be wider, for food prices are as much as ten times higher. Official indices for real wages may be considered to varnish the truth; yet even they show that the skilled miner is now earning no more than 49 per cent of what he earned before the civil war, the skilled engineer 46 per cent, the textile worker 51 per cent, and the agricultural laborer 56 per cent. And the downward course of these indices since 1936 has been monotonously steady.

NOTHING is simple in Spain, and here again one has to make distinctions. Wages are divided into two parts—the wage itself and official bounties or allowances. If a man is in registered employment, his allowances may double his wage, or even, if he has several children, much more than double it; if he is not registered, he receives only the basic wage. Officially there is no unemployment. Employers hire men without registering them in order to escape the special taxes levied on wages—for the funds of the Instituto Nacional de Previsión and so forth. The worker is not registered as employed, but he is also not registered as unemployed; and so the unemployment figures remain as low as delighted visiting Senators have found and reported.

I inspected several workers' budgets in Madrid—prices are rather higher but wages the same in Barcelona and Bilbao. (As I said in my first article, the exchange rate should probably not be reckoned at less than 45 or 50 pesetas to the dollar.) A skilled engineer with a wife and two children received 34 pesetas a day (basic wage 22 pesetas); a conductor on the Madrid subway, 32 pesetas a day (basic wage 14-25); an upholsterer was getting just under 31 pesetas. A registered skilled worker with a family may receive between 900 and 1,000 pesetas a month, and a registered unskilled worker with a family between 600 and 700 a month. The rent of one room in a working-class suburb of Madrid costs between 150 and 200 pesetas, but many families, of course, can afford only one corner of a room. One kilogram of bread on the black market—the official ration is negligible—costs 12 pesetas; one a day amounts to 372 pesetas a month. One liter of oil a week costs 88 pesetas a month. Since a man with a family obviously cannot live on his wages, or even on his and his wife's, everyone tries to find another job, or a little racket in buying and selling, or access to some kind of graft. In consequence a worker often puts in twelve hours a day for six or seven days a week; and he does his job, as one may imagine, with extreme inefficiency and wastefulness, and with despair and hatred in his heart.

In these circumstances financial aid from abroad can achieve only one object. It can increase the well-being of the state machine—the bureaucracy and all the hangers-on of the dictator—and swell the profits of a few extremely reactionary capitalists; it cannot arrest the process of impoverishment. Direct deliveries of food might to some extent alleviate the sufferings of the people of the towns, but not with any certainty. Some months ago the United States embassy in Madrid, aroused by the criminally anti-social attitude of the ruling oligarchy, announced that the Spanish government had purchased 42,500 tons of surplus American potatoes at the price of one cent for a 100-pound bag and was selling these potatoes to the Madrid black market—not the consumer—charging for two pounds as much as it had paid the United States for one ton. This announcement, needless to say, was not allowed to appear in the Spanish press.

The Spanish people, now nearer to mass starvation than ever before in their history, deserve whatever help can be sent to them. But any aid given a regime which does not scruple to speculate in starvation will go almost entirely into the wrong pockets and the wrong mouths. Only the abolition of the monstrous state machine could justify financial aid to Spain. But that would mean the abolition of Franco.

No Comment

AN ADMIRAL who once was ambassador to Russia saw red here to day about Christmas stars atop the civic center. Retired Admiral William H. Standley declared the decorations were similar to the Soviet symbol. Other San Diegans had declared they noted the same similarity. City officials and a Chamber of Commerce decorations committee said the stars were really orange color. Standley said he still saw red when he looked at them and declared: "Something ought to be done about it." He suggested poinsettias to replace them.—An A. P. dispatch in the San Francisco *Chronicle*, December 15.

BISHOP THOMAS K. GORMAN, Bishop of Reno . . . cited difficulties being faced by church-supported schools, saying "we may be closer to state monopoly of all college training than we realize. Lavish, tax-supported education is challenging the very right of free schools to exist" [by] . . . taking funds needed by private institutions.—The San Francisco *News*, December 4.

THE MAGAZINE BUSINESS is primarily one of reselling paper.—From a discussion of paper prices in *Magazine Industry Newsletter*, December 9.

SUICIDAL AS THAT MAY SEEM to Americans, they will not accept less food and fewer houses to provide more arms. The British and French in their present mood are more determined to keep their bare necessities than even Americans are to hold onto their luxuries.—Ludwell Denny in the New York *World Telegram and Sun*, November 29.

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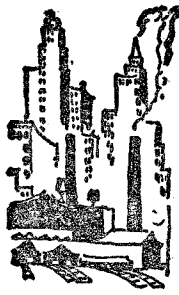

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Yesterday and Tomorrow

TWELVE months ago financial commentators were inclined to hedge their bets as they reviewed prospects for 1950. After the mild but definite recession which began in the spring of 1949, the American economy had recovered its equilibrium, and the consensus of opinion was that no serious setback need be anticipated for at least six months. Beyond midsummer, however, the crystal ball seemed cloudy. Many observers were worried by the persistence of unemployment, although it constituted a real problem in only a few areas, and feared that in the spring new entrants into industry would encounter difficulties in finding jobs. A falling off in corporate plans for expansion was also noted: it appeared to indicate that the high level of business investment which had played a major part in the post-war boom would decline rather rapidly in the course of 1950.

While no sharp slump in prices was anticipated, it was generally thought that they would follow a downward trend. The New York *Times*, in its annual Review and Forecast section published on January 3, suggested that farm prices might drop as much as 10 per cent. It also foresaw some decline in industrial profits. However, side by side with such discussions of deflationary prospects were warnings of the inflationary tendencies of federal financial policies. There was much shaking of heads when the President's budget message indicated an excess of expenditure over revenue of more than $5 billion. The continued flow of red ink, we were told, was dissolving the value of the dollar and threatening to wash away the foundations of our economy. Thus students of the financial pages found themselves confronted with an unresolved contradiction. On the one hand, they were urged to watch out for the consequences of overproduction—unemployed man-power, unsold stocks of goods; on the other, they were warned of the danger of overstimulation of purchasing power as a result of deficit financing by the government.

By spring neither of these dangers seemed very imminent. Prices were rather firmer but showed no signs of running away. The decline in business-investment expenditure proved smaller than expected and was being fully compensated for by a credit-fed house-building boom. And while the demand for non-durable consumer goods remained rather slack, that for automobiles and television sets was such as to keep these industries operating at near-capacity. Fears about a shortage of jobs faded when the spring pick-up in employment proved considerably better than originally forecast. The stock market continued to move slowly but steadily upward, with declining earnings in some industries offset by bountiful profits and higher dividends in others.

Thus as mid-summer approached, the American economy was riding on an even keel and the prognosticators were talking of fair weather ahead. But in these days economics is at the mercy of politics, and the whole picture changed when the North Korean Communist government ordered its army to cross the Thirty-eighth Parallel. Not that any slump followed, except temporarily on the stock exchanges. On the contrary, the decision of the Administration to support the South Koreans and to launch an enormously expanded rearmament program gave the signal for the wildest kind of boom. There was a panicky rush to turn money into goods on the part of industrialists, merchants, and housewives. Manufacturers stepped up production hoping to skim as much cream as possible from the civilian market before they were forced to convert to meet military demands. Blueprints for plant expansion which had been laid aside were brushed off. Business borrowing expanded week after week, and consumer credit increased prodigiously until the Federal Reserve Board jammed on the brakes.

Prices generally advanced, and by mid-September the index of retail prices stood 4.2 points higher than a year earlier. The movement of wholesale prices, and particularly those of industrial raw materials, was much more sensational. On October 25 the Federal Reserve Board's Basic Commodity Index (1939=100) stood at 331.5, comparing with 247.7 at the end of 1949, and the prices of individual strategic materials showed much larger percentage increases. It was clear that a billion dollars appropriated in July for arms manufacture was going to buy far fewer planes or tanks or radar instruments than Congress had anticipated. Wages too were on the march. By the end of the year most labor unions had successfully pressed claims for raises which compensated them for increases in the cost of living and in many cases gave them, temporarily at least, additional real purchasing power.

Stock prices have been flying upward, despite occasional sharp drops when they encountered air pockets of bad news, and the last few days of the year witnessed the kind of bull market which has not been seen in two decades. Clearly the stock-traders anticipate more inflation in the coming year, and I am afraid they are right. As appropriations begin to be translated into actual orders there are going to be more shortages of materials and more production bottlenecks, which will have to be met by further cuts in output for civilian use. With full employment and take-home pay enhanced not only by higher wage-rates but by a longer working week, with profits and dividends at an all-time peak, total consumer income seems destined to grow steadily unless Congress adopts a much harsher tax program than it has yet been willing to consider. Thus abundant money is likely to continue to chase scarce goods, with the result that prices will continue to move upward even though mandatory controls replace the present voluntary restraints.

Fortunately production will also expand. Barring actual war, Americans will continue to enjoy a good deal of butter, even if neither quantity nor quality is quite what they have become accustomed to in recent years. According to the *Wall Street Journal* of December 28, the volume of goods and services available for civilians will be little if any smaller than it was in 1949. The severest degree of austerity to be expected here would seem like extravagant luxury to the rest of the world. That is something to remember when we read about the unwillingness of Europeans to make sacrifices for the common cause.

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BOOKS and the ARTS

The Eternal Girondin

PIERRE VERGNIAUD. By Claude G. Bowers. The Macmillan Company. $6.50.

EVERY schoolboy knows dimly of Mirabeau, Lafayette, Danton, Marat, and Robespierre: they, and Marie-Antoinette, belong to our folklore. Not all teachers of history remember Vergniaud. Even in France, although he had streets and also a battleship named after him, his fame is but vaguely luminous. He played a vanguard part in two decisive events—the declaration of war against Austria and the downfall of the monarchy. But he was above all an orator, "the voice of the Revolution," and his eloquence is too Ciceronian for our taste. A few defiant phrases hurled by Mirabeau and Danton still ring in our ears as though spoken by Churchill yesterday; Vergniaud's labored periods have left no echo.

Vergniaud's supreme achievement was not his life but his death. The First Republic killed without a qualm the noblest philosopher of the time, Condorcet; the greatest scientist, Lavoisier; the only true poet, André Chénier; the most generous statesman, Vergniaud. An ugly record. Vergniaud went down, in true Pascalian fashion, greater than that which was crushing him. He was heroic to the last, with only a dash of the theatricality that belonged to the period. He had little personal hope; nor, it seems, did he greatly care for his own safety. He was anxious to save his friends and vindicate his principles. The last chapter, even without the romantic embellishments uncritically accepted by Lamartine, is a moving story; and Claude Bowers has told it well.

For him, this life of Vergniaud was a labor of love: as a child he had read the impassioned pages of Lamartine's "History of the Girondins," once a classic found in every cultured household. And his interest in the subject would deepen in the present world crisis. The problem of Vergniaud is that of the eternal Girondin—the devoted revolutionist who tries to keep the revolution pure. Lamartine himself, in 1848, was such a Girondin. So, if I trust an impression rather than direct and detailed knowledge, was Alexander Kerensky. The fate of all Girondins is to be crushed between rival fanaticisms; and as a reward for their sacrifice to be derided and spurned as ineffectual idealists by those historians whose "realism" is but a veil for cowardice. Against this judgment I have protested from my high-school days. I was born a Girondin, and *The Nation* is a citadel of unrepentant Girondinism.

So I cannot voice too strongly my sympathy with Claude Bowers's attitude. But as history his work suffers from the fault of most biographies: by overemphasizing one personality, the general picture is thrown out of perspective and focus. It is true that there was no formal Girondin Party; not even a cohesive Girondin group: the Rolands, Condorcet, Barbaroux, Brissot, Guadet, Gensonné, Valazé, Buzot, Boyer-Fonfrède, never followed a single and rigid line. Their relations with Lafayette to the right of them, with Danton to the left of them, were at times disconcerting. Still, they had political and social affinities; most of them were friends; and it is not wholly unfair that Vergniaud, even when personally guiltless, should share their collective responsibility.

From the point of view of the Mountain, the Girondins were guilty on two counts. They became counter-revolutionaries as soon as the Revolution, after destroying the privileges of the class above them, began to threaten their own. Claude Bowers does not blink the fact. They believed that "in the good society the protection of property was inseparably associated with the rights of men." Garat, who at heart was with them, considered "great properties not like sterile lakes . . . but as a necessary reservoir." The rich bourgeoisie had decreed the death penalty against anyone who should propose an "agrarian law," that is, in the language of the time, a socialistic measure. (It is true that Brissot, after the church fathers and Rousseau, but long before Proudhon, had said, "Property is theft.")

The second count against them was "federalism"—the attempt to break the dictatorship of Paris and reassert the rights of provincial France. In that sense, I am a federalist myself, for complex reasons. The French urge that centralization and *Gleichschaltung* would not be good for the German soul. I agree, but I maintain that this great truth remains valid on the left bank of the Rhine. But monolithic unity, "the Republic One and Indivisible," was the first article of the Jacobin creed. It was thought indispensable to the survival of the Revolution, and of France herself. The country was attacked on all frontiers —thanks to the spirited policy of the Girondins; civil war had flared up in Toulon, in Lyons, in the Vendée. The Girondins' appeal to their chief city, Bordeaux, threatened further division for the harassed nation. At Caen the Girondins were openly preparing armed resistance. Vergniaud denied that he was a "federalist." Still, the tendency of the faction with which he was associated was unmistakable. If America were living under the same desperate circumstances, I wager that dissenters of the Girondin type would receive even shorter shrift.

The chief weakness of Claude Bowers's earnest and painstaking book is its ingenuous partisanship. Granted that Vergniaud was as great a genius and as lambent a soul as his hagiographer believes, I cannot admit that Robespierre was the incarnate fiend he describes. I hate Robespierrism: it is a form of *"l'infâme"* that all true Voltaireans have vowed to crush. But Robespierre himself meant well. His life was pure; the salvation of the country was uppermost in his thought. In Thermidor he was overthrown, not by the surge of decent citizens, but by the "rotten" and the profiteers. His Terror was mild compared with the epic massacres of which Chiang Kai-shek boasted for so many years. Paris, says Bowers himself, was tranquil. That calm was not the result of hopeless dread; it came from the assurance that the representatives of the people—*Domini canes*—were on the job, relentlessly thwarting the plots of Pitt, Coburg, and their fifth columnists. On the

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last page we see a good provincial bourgeois rushing to Danton with the "good news" that the Girondins had been condemned and executed. In our own days trials which seemed to me the most arrant triumphs of sheer partisanship were hailed with the same unreasoning enthusiasm by gentle-minded and enlightened citizens.

The story is dramatic from the first, and somber at the end. The gloom is partly relieved by a vein of gentle irony. Bowers, half-consciously perhaps, parodies his diplomatic colleague M. de Norpois. The hoariest clichés are deftly woven—this is catching—into the fabric of his narrative. There are "knights in shining armor" who may find themselves "in durance vile," and some have "a blot on their escutcheon." People are "dined and wined, not wisely but all too well." "Coming events" duly "cast their shadow before"; "the female of the Revolution is more deadly than the male." Whilst "flames are fanned" they generate "more heat than light." "Confusion grows worse confounded"; a poor girl has a child "without benefit of clergy," if you understand what I mean. And, believe it or not, "the fly in the ointment" "rears its ugly head." It is very delicately done; so delicately that it may have escaped the author's notice.

ALBERT GUERARD

Reyes of Mexico

THE POSITION OF AMERICA AND OTHER ESSAYS. By Alfonso Reyes. Selected and Translated from the Spanish by Harriet de Onís. Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

TO *NATION* readers Alfonso Reyes is only relatively a new name. He appeared in these pages in the spring of 1941 along with other distinguished authors in a survey of Latin American literature.

But to the book-reading public this Mexican sage makes his first appearance in this volume. Shepherded on to the English-speaking stage by Harriet de Onís, introduced to the American reading public by Professor Federico de Onís, he appears in the best tradition of the Spanish-speaking scholar who has for so many years been sure of friends and advisers in the Spanish Department of Columbia University. The publisher has given his book a dress, designed by young Harry Ford, which is not only distinguished and beautiful but also peculiarly fitted to the work of this famous master.

Alfonso Reyes has been an educator, a philosopher, a diplomat serving as Mexico's ambassador in Paris, Buenos Aires, Madrid, and Rio de Janeiro; in short, a man of that deep eighteenth-century cultural tradition which has few representatives left in the United States. Jefferson belonged to it, John Adams understood it, Franklin Roosevelt warmed his age with an echo of its breadth but lacked its depth. The type still exists in Europe and is still an ideal to which Latin America pays respect.

And what has he written—this man for whom the drums thus roll and the red carpet is thus put out? Essays, poems, short stories, criticism. "The most personal and Mexican feature of it is that mingle of wit, elegance, and serene melancholy which underlies the richness of language and the literary evocations," says his sponsor.

Given a man of Reyes's high caliber and abundant activity within a great tradition, the problem becomes one of selection for his first introduction to a foreign public. His translator presents ten essays which give a reasonably good cross-section of Reyes's prose and wisely refrains from trying to put his poetry into English. His famous Vision of Anáhuac is here, and a revealing essay on the native poetry which the Spaniards found in Mexico. He writes about Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and about Virgil in Mexico. These are literary canapés, so to speak, crisp and sweet and with a surprising tang.

His more solid and provocative thinking appears in the title essay and in one on the American mind which precedes it. It is very salutary for a citizen of the United States to find that "American" here means what goes on south of the Rio Grande, where Anglo-Saxons are a problem, Indians are a burden, and Spain is a shopworn ancestor on the down grade with whom modern descendants do not get along very well.

All these essays are classics in the Reyes portfolio, with a value which is more than transitory. Yet one hopes that some day the Reyes thinking may appear contemporaneously, so that we know what he is thinking while he is thinking it, and do not have to recall the frame of mind which sparked an idea not so sharp when it reaches us as it must have been in its moment. Perhaps Mrs. Onís, having broken through the barrier that divides us from Reyes, may give us a new book of comment while it is still news. Thanks to her we know what Reyes thought about various yesterdays—the next thing we want to know is what he thinks about today.

MILDRED ADAMS

Concerning Scholars

THE SCHOLAR ADVENTURERS. By Richard D. Altick. The Macmillan Company. $5.

WHILE Boswell's new journal climbs up the best-seller list, this book is opportune; it relates the adventures of many scholars who are endowed with ingenuity and perseverance if not with the rare luck to see their discoveries raised to such celestial heights. Mr. Altick's book is a challenge to popular misconceptions about scholars, for it is by a scholar about other scholars and yet enormously human and readable. He can launch a story, keep it afloat, and twist its tail with a neat anecdote when it flags.

After an introductory chapter which refutes the popular stereotype he presents fourteen separate essays on various phases of scholarly adventure, each treated differently to avoid monotony. Confining himself to recent cases, for the most part, he tells first about the Boswell papers—"The Secret of the Ebony Cabinet"—where literary sleuthing discovered the magnificent "London Journal." In other chapters his scholars adventure into dense archives to dig out forgotten documents that reconstruct the life of Sir Thomas Malory and the death of Christopher Marlowe. Or scholars dig their material out of reluctant families (Thackeray's and Emily Dickinson's). The literary sleuth may find himself on the trail of bibliophiles and scholars who have forged for motives of profit or pride. The most exciting case is that of the eminently respectable Thomas J. Wise, whose story has been fully told elsewhere in a book entitled "Forging Ahead." The hoaxes that he perpetrated are innocent—he pre-published authentic works—compared to the diabolical ones of John Payne Collier, who inter-

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polated his forgeries on Elizabethan documents, so that now even his honest scholarship, which is often brilliant, is under suspicion.

In several other essays Altick goes into the obstacles that scholar adventurers face, including destruction, ignorance, prudery; and some of their weapons—science and cryptology. (He happily omits the Baconian controversy, a form of pseudo-scholarship.) And he concludes with the narratives of two scholars whose adventures carried them far beyond archives and microfilms; one on Byron's trail through Italy, Turkey, and Greece, the other on Conrad's through Borneo. He thus crisscrosses the entire field of modern scholarship, pointing up its relevance to many writers, including Shelley, Wordsworth, Walpole, Pepys, Shakespeare, Burns, Hawthorne. Although he sensibly mentions that research may be a *mis*adventure, he naturally enough plays up its glamour and romance; and its fascination for the scholar is transmitted to the reader.

His book, then, as popular reading is first-rate—solid, rewarding, and lively. But eventually it raises a question, dealt with briefly, which is being debated on college campuses and even in the precincts of the Modern Language Association. Of what use to literature are these historical, biographical, bibliographical discoveries? Is "Childe Harold" a better poem because we know the nature of Byron's deformity? Is our understanding of "Doctor Faustus" deepened by knowledge of the brawl that ended its author's life? The answer, instead of being strangled by an *either-or* choice, should be a *both-and* synthesis. That is, the historical approach to a piece of literature gives it illumination from the outside, while the aesthetic-critical gives it inner luminosity. The contribution of all these scholars adds—in the terminology of Wellek and Warren—valuable "extrinsic" knowledge, and so justifies its usefulness to literature.

A footnote on publishing decorum. Macmillan omits mention in the book, book jacket, or publicity release of Altick's biography of the Cowden Clarkes, published last year, a delightful and substantial volume about those Victorian bardolators. Could the reason be that another publisher (Oxford University Press) issued it? ROBERT HALSBAND

Sense on Aesthetics

PHILOSOPHY OF THE ARTS. By Morris Weitz. Harvard University Press. $4.

PROFESSOR WEITZ has written a compact and sensible discussion of some important problems in aesthetics. Taking as his point of departure the work of Clive Bell and Roger Fry, he sums up the doctrine of "significant form" and the chief criticisms that have been leveled against it. The issue between formalism and its critics he would resolve by redefining *form* and *content* to fit his "organic" theory of art. The best chapter is the final one on appreciation. Here the author criticizes briefly the assumptions of Freud, the somewhat outmoded doctrines of Tolstoy, and certain more recent theories, including modern forms of the "play" or "make-believe" theory. He closes with some quite sensible observations of his own.

The philosophical world will not be much shaken by this book, which wears a faint aura of the academic lecture room. On the other hand, the author is pleasantly free of both arrogance and heat; he falls into no absurdities, and he makes no grandiose claims. Lytton Strachey suggested that the best test of a man's intelligence may be his capacity for making a summary; by this test Professor Weitz excels some more pretentious writers.

It is a pity that in one fully elaborated critique of an individual work of art the author is not at his best. His interpretation of Eliot's "Prufrock" is unlikely to be widely accepted by thoughtful readers of poetry. ELISABETH SCHNEIDER

The Art of Courbet

GUSTAVE COURBET. By Marcel Zahar. Harper and Brothers. $3.

THE text of this most recent addition to Harper's Art Library combines a lively account of Courbet's eventual career with a critical appraisal of his work. The latter includes a rather labored discussion of the idea of realism as contrasted with romanticism (Delacroix) and the classical point of view (Ingres—though concerning Ingres I keep remembering Mather's remark that his mind was a busy harem).

Zahar's unlimited praise of Courbet is a little naive. The key to Courbet, it seems to me, lies in the conflict between his plastic power, which metamorphoses his crass sensuality into art, and his literal-mindedness. Many of his forceful images are marred by the inclusion of sheer inventories of fact. How magnificent is the central trio of The Village Girls (Metropolitan, New York)—like three Gothic portal statues—and how utterly boring the surrounding yardage of canvas! Among painters seemingly devoid of imagination Courbet is certainly the greatest. How he could achieve such grandeur under such a handicap is a paradox that must be resolved if his creative power is to be properly evaluated. It is simply not true that his art is visionary or that his emotional intensity borders on mysticism, as Zahar would have us believe.

Courbet's dark and massive pictures are difficult enough to reproduce, but even under these circumstances the eight color plates can hardly be considered adequate, particularly in areas where an impasto of rich green dominates. It was this green which shocked so many of Courbet's contemporaries. Today it is

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still a living language in the painting of Dunoyer de Segonzac—a connection Zahar might well have mentioned.

The selection of works for reproduction is admirable. I miss only one of the late "empty" marines, those sky and water paintings which link Courbet with the impressionists. One of the best of these is Calm Sea, in the Metropolitan. Next to such a picture, as Venturi has remarked, The Wave and the other more famous and dramatic marine paintings are "mere side-shows."

S. LANE FAISON, JR.

Drama

MARGARET MARSHALL

IT IS good to see a production of "King Lear" even when it falls short of one's idea of what it should and could be, for only when the play is articulated in sound and motion are its wonders made fully manifest. The production at the National Theater, directed by John Houseman, falls short in many ways, some of them crucial, but it has solid virtues as well—and some of its defects could easily be eliminated.

For one thing the pace is right. The performance moves swiftly, and several intelligent devices contribute to this end. The play itself has been stripped down, in purely mechanical ways, the better to go forward. It is divided into three acts, with two rather short intermissions, and the localization of places and times is unstressed. During the first two acts the setting is altered only enough, by means of a platform lowered or raised, to indicate changes of scene. The rest is done by lighting which is imaginative and dramatic as well as ingenious and hard-working—the lighting, devised by Ralph Alswang, does more scene-shifting than the stage hands.

All this makes for intensity, continuity, illusion, and speed. The principal trouble is that the play is pitched and kept at one level of intensity—I might say noise. As a result the crescendo and climax of the storm and Lear's madness are belittled by what has gone before, and, more serious, there is very little modulation afterward. Even the very last scene, which should surely be played with utmost quietness, is feverish with sound and movement. Lear declaims the five "Nevers" and lunges about the stage as he declaims them. The power of this last scene is also impaired by the third-act décor. The setting for the first two acts is sufficiently grand and simple. It is also vague, shadowed, legendary, looming. The setting for the third is garish, fussy, literal, and flooded with broad daylight. To me it seemed designed for an arbitrary happy ending, not for the relentless, purging resolution which is the final wonder of "King Lear."

The acting, from that of Louis Calhern down, is more earnest than distinguished, more strenuous than sure. The best performance is that of Jo Van Fleet as Regan. She gives a very convincing portrayal, not only of Lear's daughter but of a younger sister, less vicious than her elder but driven to even worse behavior by the compulsion to emulate and placate a superior force. By contrast with this Regan in the round, most of the other characters seem flat and two-dimensional, moved from without, not from within.

But the most grievous defect—and it is pretty grievous—is the breaking-up of the cadence of the lines. "The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain," for instance, is broken after "fro," and the word "conflicting" is made to sound like the beginning of a new phrase. This breaking-up occurs so frequently as to seem deliberate. If so it is very ill-advised, for much of the meaning of "Lear" is in its reverberating cumulative music.

The production has one important negative virtue. There is no attempt to exploit any one of its infinite varieties of significance "for our age." And this virtue is its own reward. I for one, having gone to see a "revival" of Shakespeare, found yesterday's legend sounding and pointing up today's reality at every turn. Nothing, after all, is so timely as the timeless.

Arthur Miller's adaptation of Ibsen's "An Enemy of the People" (Broadhurst Theater) is a painful example of what can happen when such exploitation goes wrong. The weaknesses of the original—and they are considerable—are played up, not down, in this confused version, and the acting seems designed to emphasize them even more. Thus the hero of the play, Dr. Stockman, as adapted by Mr. Miller and as acted by Fredric March, appears not as the pure, naive scientist, fanatic for truth, but as something of a fool with a desire for power; while his brother, the villain of the piece, thanks mainly to the superior acting of Morris Carnovsky, is far more sympathetic! In the adaptation as in the original, the first act is the weakest; the second and third are better because the central situation, which is basically dramatic, takes over.

"Captain Brassbound's Conversion" (City Center) I found delightful. Edna Best, to be sure, is far and away the most accomplished performer in the cast, and she is superb as Lady Cicely. But since the play itself is a study of the consternation, awkwardness, and discomfiture of a strange assortment of males in their attempts to cope with a charming woman who knows exactly what she is doing, the inferior skill of the other members of the cast makes less difference than it otherwise might. As for the play, it is Shaw on a spree—and that requires no justification either in dramaturgy or logic; though Lady Cicely's argument for the defense in the trial scene is a wonderful example of the logic—or should one say the logistics—of wit.

There was great acclaim for another revival, "Twentieth Century," by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur (ANTA Theater). I thought its Hechtic horse play got very tiresome after the first forty-five minutes and came to seem as dated as yesterday's newspaper. Gloria Swanson wears her clothes beautifully, but the stage is not her natural habitat. As for José Ferrer, whom I once admired, he would seem to have responded to success by becoming obsessed with his own importance. His acting here is mainly exhibitionism.

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Art

MANNY FARBER

NEW YORK'S leadership in avant-garde painting is strongly contested by a young San Francisco clique whose somber, still nature abstractions are totally free of European influences. Of their names—Smith, Corbett, Bischoff, Still, Diebenkorn, Roeber—only Still's is recognized even around the Bay area. Their yawning canvases suggest a number of geographical references. The flat, wild, wide-open Western terrain seems to be portrayed in these fleeting landscapes of unfenced vastness, a few sentinel shapes, and worn edges. San Francisco's position as jumping-off point to the Orient is suggested by effects reminiscent of Chinese painting—particularly by the washy, atmospheric color. The city's coastal position is suggested in form that is vague and obscure everywhere except along the canvas edge.

These painters, however, are neither regionalists nor realists. They are, on the contrary, true non-objectivists—arch-rebels against the self-confident act always present in European painting, wherein the artist experiences, arranges, and appropriates his subject matter, turning it into an object which is subordinated to the artist's taste, technique, and dexterity. The Bay painters try for a relationship between artist and subject that sustains the existence of subject. They present the instantaneous wholeness of matter, freed of identifying facts that the painter has seen or learned.

Clifford Still is the leader of this group. He is an unfeeling painter, but his huge shadowy canvases point the way out of the "objectifying" act through a use of depersonalizing tricks. Still uses a picture-enveloping tone of impenetrable black or umber in an almost burlesque attempt to avoid "touching" his subject. His rough surface—resembling an infinity of tufted ant hills—is woven without intention, choking the canvas with inert paint. The abrasive darkness thrusts up occasional fire-like shapes (acid yellow, phlegm white) methodically confused in contour and juxtaposed to keep the eye from centering anywhere.

Ed Corbett, who stands out in this easily satisfied coterie, uses the impersonalist theory to make poetic pictures of emptiness; the paintings of this lonely Arizonan catch the bitter gloom of current times. His technique starts with a starved palette (gray, black, red house paint) which is further simplified into a one-color canvas, enriched by a treacherous texture of varying paint qualities and finishes (enamel, flat, waxy). Corbett not only robs his color of its voice but by glazing and powerful brushing tries to efface rather than build form. This creates a gray, vacant work that bides its time while a tortuous underground life throbs beneath the crust-like surface, occasionally breaking through in a rage of etched lines or splattered cobwebs. The burying, cloaking method permits Corbett to express aspects of life—emptiness, stillness, waiting—never before painted directly. His pursuit of a timeless, spaceless design rejects the flamboyant plasticity of the School of Paris.

The work of these non-objectivists stood out at the recent San Francisco Art Festival, a free-for-all exhibit in which the city fathers did the hanging and reluctantly gave $5,000 in prizes, mostly for abstractions they couldn't understand. ("I wish I could get them to stop painting like that.") Though jumbled together in a leaky hangar-like structure, the 2,000 entries proved that American artists feast more on technique than on whatever it is that makes great painting. The scramble for mechanical thrills produced among other things a grisly relief of nylon stockings saturated with paint and plastered together to produce a close-up of a neck-and-neck finish at Pimlico; a sculptured network of crocheted wire which created organic shapes within shapes, with an occasional bead or button caught up in a stitch; a mysterious abstraction, so long—two by ninety feet—that not even the artist had ever seen it in its entirety. This same artist, John Howard, won first prize ($500) for a small, realistic, super-detailed tempera of a mountain landscape pinpointed with Indians, which may possibly have been painted under a microscope.

Judging from this exhibit the San Francisco artist would seem to be a stylish technician, working in a climate free of serious criticism; a contented family man (unlike the Greenwich Villager) at his best with craft items like driftwood pendants, mosaic end tables, and suspension earrings in which little splinters float.

Records

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HAYDN'S Symphony No. 92 ("Oxford"), one of the finest of the last series, gets a straightforward reading of the score from Koussevitzky with beautiful-sounding playing by the Boston Symphony. Bass must be reduced. On the reverse side of the RCA Victor LP is their similar performance of Mozart's "Eine kleine Nachtmusik"—the finale played too fast for clarity.

Two early Haydn symphonies, Nos. 26 and 36, played by the Vienna Chamber Orchestra under Anton Heiller on a Haydn Society record (1019), I find unimpressive. The twelve German Dances and Minuets played by members of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under Hans Gillesberger (1022) were written by Haydn to be danced to in the Redoutensaal, and get to be tiresome when merely listened to. The four Notturni played by the Vienna Chamber Orchestra under Franz Litschauer

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(1023) are pleasant music of no great consequence.

One of these Notturni, under the title Partita in F, is played with enlivening style and phrasing by a group of N. B. C. Symphony musicians under Edvard Fendler (EMS-3). And on the reverse side are two of the many Haydn piano sonatas that are unknown to the musical public though they provide exciting examples of the Haydn process of "dramatic surprise at the moment" (I am quoting Tovey) in which "nothing is difficult to follow, but almost everything is unexpected." No. 43 is one of the most highly developed and finest of the series, No. 51 a delightful smaller-scale example; and they are played effectively —i.e. with evident awareness of what Haydn is up to—by Charles Rosen. The sound of the first movement of No. 43 has a few buzzes, the Partita side some noisy surface defects.

Mozart's Serenade K.388 for 8 winds is played by members of the Bavarian Radio Orchestra under Rosbaud on a Mercury record (MG-10039). The writing for winds is of course a delight to the ear; but I find the work more effective in the version for string quintet K.406, which also is more sensitively played by the Budapest Quartet and Katims. Inappropriately coupled with the Mozart piece is Brahms's Serenade No. 2, which is beautifully played by the same orchestra and conductor. Bass must be reduced; surfaces are noisy.

After Kleiber's monkey-business in Tchaikovsky's Fourth I was agreeably surprised by the steadiness of his performance of the first movement of Beethoven's "Eroica" with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, and noted how much better it was reproduced by the London record (LLP-239) than Toscanini's by the Victor. But after a while I began to be aware of its lack of the sharpened clarity of outline and texture, the inner cohesive tensions and continuity of impetus that make the Toscanini performance unique and preferable even though imperfectly recorded; and the quavering Concertgebouw oboe is not negligible. Kleiber's similar performance of Beethoven's Seventh with the same orchestra (LLP-240) begins too fast for *poco sostenuto* and ends a little too slowly for *Allegro con brio*; the bass is heavy and rumbling in the last two movements; and the surfaces of both records crackle.

Monteux's performance of the first movement of Beethoven's Eighth with the San Francisco Symphony is good; but the third movement lacks grace, and the effect of the recurrent jolt on C sharp in the finale is spoiled, for me, by the little pause that Monteux makes before it. The sound from the Victor LP record is a little tight; bass must be reduced.

Schubert's inconsequential Symphony No. 2 gets a lively performance by Münch and the Boston Symphony; and the sound from the Victor LP record is more spacious.

The performance of Brahms's First by Stokowski and the Hollywood Bowl Symphony issued on another Victor LP I take to be a dubbing of the one issued on vinylite a few years ago. It is a performance which exaggerates what is excessive in the work to start with; and its LP sound needs stepping up of bass and has high-frequency distortion even with treble reduced.

Rehearing Strauss's "Also sprach Zarathustra" I have found it to be even more unsuccessful in its pretensions and its musical invention than I did the last time. The occasion for listening is a superbly reproduced performance by Krauss and the Vienna Philharmonic on a London record (LLP-232).

Nor do further hearings make me care more for Hindemith's "Mathis der Maler"—not even the rehearing of so magnificent a performance as Cantelli's with the N. B. C. Symphony, excellently reproduced on a Victor LP. On the other side is a dubbing of the earlier beautiful performance of Haydn's Symphony No. 93, the sound less spacious and resonant than in the 78 rpm version, with bass that needs to be reduced.

Parts of Hindemith's "The Four Temperaments"—the third section of the theme, and certain sections of the variations, especially the Phlegmatic—I find engaging; they are in a lush, sensuous, and conventional idiom strangely different from the more normal sour, acrid idiom of the other parts which I do not care for (except as sound track for Balanchine's wonderful choreography). A good performance by the Zimbler String Sinfonietta with Lukas Foss as solo pianist is on a Decca record (DL-7501) which reproduces the piano poorly at times and has noisy surface defects at the beginning and end.

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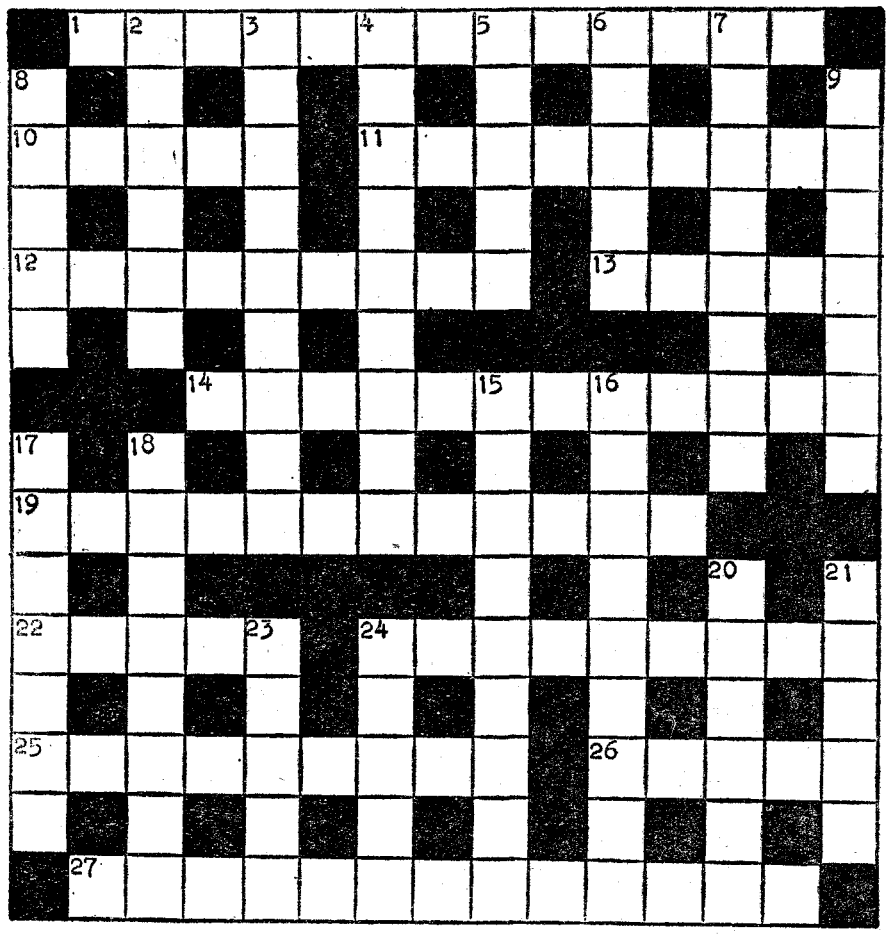
Crossword Puzzle No. 394

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Magic sounds descriptive of Mimi. (7-2-4)
10 Time I found pleasing in Paradise. (5)
11 Workers referred to in Verdi's *Home to Our Mountains?* (9)
12 A dissenter does and is greased. (9)
13 A potpourri of a Chopin number is soothing. (5)
14 and 19. Implying a good look in fact is a good look in deed. (8, 2, 2, 8, 4)
22 Spare cuts. (5)
24 When it comes to diamonds, this covers the globe. (9)
25 Savior who brings things home to us. (9)
26 Might involve a note of confidence. (5)
27 Double standard of Lehar's waltz? (4, 3, 6)

DOWN

2 Charpentier's wasn't Chevalier's girl! (6)
3 Is bottled, perhaps, like mica. (9)
4 Sounds like a presidential oath! (6, 3)
5 The Greeks found them in entrails. (5)
6 See 20.
7 Tumor in one's palm. (8)
8 Protection in after-life? (5)
9 Criticize as of itself. (7)
15 What you do at Winchester, perhaps. (5, 4)
16 27 is so simple! (9)
17 May imply acting, but is only a slow burn to a humorist! (7)
18 Get relief here? Quite the opposite! (8)
20 and 6. Tally polls? (11)
21 Thick-sounding hollows? (5)
23 Put aside. (5)
24 Red lake. (5)

• • • • •

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 393

ACROSS:—9 MEAT PIE; 10 OCTAGON; 11 TARAWA; 14 MARCONI; 15 DWARF; 17 GATED; 19 CLASSIC; 21 CARRIERS; 25 MENOTTI; 26 GROUCHO; 27 and 23 ROME WASN'T BUILT IN A DAY.

DOWN:—1, 12, 22, 1 across: SOMETHING IS ROTTEN IN THE STATE OF DENMARK; 2 ANAGRAM; 3 EMPOWERED; 4 FLEA; 5 EGOISTICAL; 6 MOTTO; 7 REGATTA; 8 ANON; 13 CONCERTINA; 15 DISENTOMB; 16 FERRYBOAT; 18 TORONTO; 20 CADUCEI; 21 COMB; 24 EGON.

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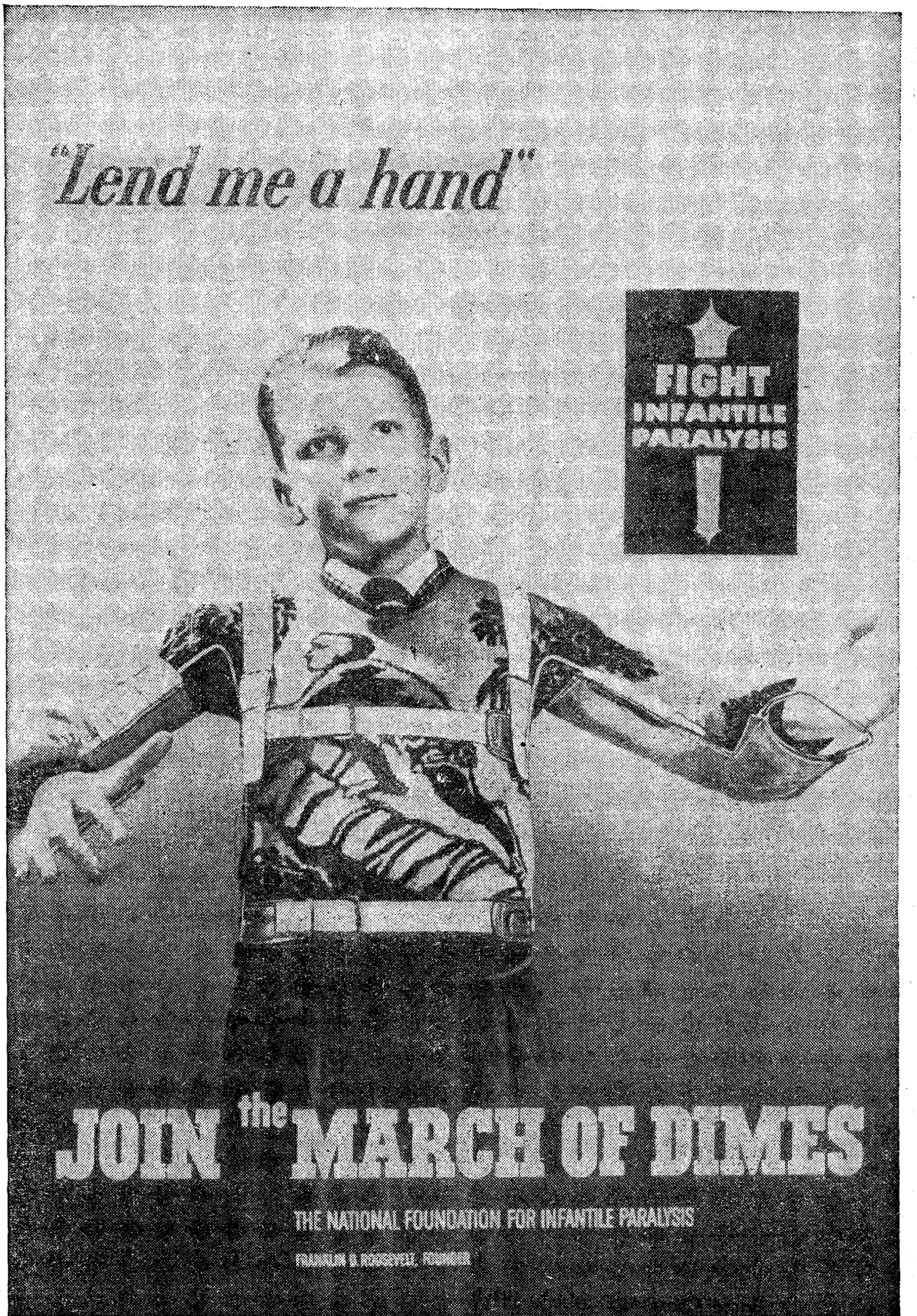

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